

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7533

INFO AMEMBASSY SEOUL

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 13452

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, JA, KS

SUBJECT: FONMIN OHIRA PUZZLED BY PRIMIN YAMAGATA
STATEMENT ON KIM TAE-CHUNG CASE

REF: TOKYO 13428

SUMMARY: PRIMIN TANAKA'S YAMAGATA STATEMENT ABOUT
KIM TAE-CHUNG CASE AND JAPAN-ROK MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE
CONTINUED TO CAUSE RIPPLES WITHIN GOJ/LDP TUESDAY
AS FONMIN OHIRA TOLD PRESS HE PUZZLED ABOUT REAL
MOTIVES BEHIND PRIMIN REMARKS. END SUMMARY.

1. FONMIN MASAYOSHI OHIRA TOLD PRESS TUESDAY THAT HE
PUZZLED OVER REAL MOTIVES BEHIND PRIMIN TANAKA YAMAGATA
STATEMENT OVER WEEKEND, WHICH APPEARED TO SUGGEST GOJ
HOPE FOR EARLY CONVENING OF POSTPONED JAPAN-ROK
MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE (REFTEL.) OHIRA STRESSED THAT
GOJ STILL WAITING FOR ACCEPTABLE RESOLUTION OF KIM
CASE, BUT DECLINED TO EXPRESS VIEWS ON POSSIBLE
TIMING OF MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE.

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2. IN SEPARATE PRESS CONFERENCE TUESDAY HOME AFFAIRS

MINISTER MASUMI ESAKI STATED THAT JAPANESE POLICE AUTHORITIES HAVE CLEAR EVIDENCE OF CRIMINAL INVOLVEMENT OF CULPRITS IN KIM CASE, WHICH HE SAID MUST BE RESOLVED THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS IN MANNER ACCEPTABLE TO JAPANESE PEOPLE.

3. MEANWHILE, FLAMBOYANT JUSTICE MINISTER ISAJI TANAKA CONTINUED TO TRY CASE IN PRESS BY TELLING REPORTERS IN NAGOYA MONDAY NIGHT THAT HE CONVINCED OF ROKG INVOLVEMENT IN KIM ABDUCTION. HE STATED BELIEF THAT ROK DIPLOMAT KIM DONG-WOON PARTICIPATED IN ABDUCTION ON INSTRUCTIONS FROM KCIA, SINCE THERE NO APPARENT REASON FOR HIM TO HAVE DONE SO ON OWN INITIATIVE. JUSTICE MINISTER ALSO DISCLOSED THAT JAPANESE POLICE ARE NOW INVESTIGATING WHETHER FIRST SECRETARY KIM DONG-WOON WAS CONCURRENTLY MEMBER OF KCIA.

4. COMMENT: OHIRA STATEMENT COMING IN COUNTERPOINT TO NIKAIDO AMPLIFICATION OF PRIMIN TANAKA'S YAMAGATA REMARKS WOULD APPEAR TO REVEAL SOME DEGREE OF GENUINE CONCERN THAT TANAKA MAY BE INCLINING TOWARD POLITICAL SETTLEMENT OF KIM TAE-CHUNG ISSUE, POSSIBLY ALONG LINES FORMER PRIMIN KISHI MAY BE ASSUMED TO HAVE RECOMMENDED ON RETURN FROM SEOUL LAST WEEK. CONTINUED DISSEMINATION OF RESULTS OF POLICE INVESTIGATIONS BY JUSTICE MINISTER AND OTHERS WOULD, OF COURSE, INHIBIT PRIMIN FROM MAKING POLITICAL SETTLEMENT WHICH FAILED AT LEAST TO DEAL ADEQUATELY WITH ALLEGED INVOLVEMENT OF KIM DONG-WOON IN ABDUCTION. MOREOVER, ANY MOVE BY PRIMIN TOWARD POLITICAL SETTLEMENT ADVOCATED BY PRO-ROK WING OF LDP WOULD BE VIEWED AS INDICATION OF CHANGE IN DELICATE BALANCE OF POWER AMONG LEADING LDP FACTIONS ON WHICH HIS OWN POSITION RESTS. END COMMENT.
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